MEMORIAL ADDRESS of Peter Thomson Kilgour
Died April 24. 1918

By Archibald McLean, President Foreign Christian Missionary Society.

We are here to think of the life and service of a good man whom God has taken to himself. We are here as his kinsfolk, his friends, and beneficiaries. We cannot think of such a life and such a service without profit to our own souls.

There is no other member of the community who is so much a public servant as the physician. Others can consult their convenience; they can have stated hours in which they can be seen; he cannot. Others can refuse to serve unless the conditions are satisfactory; the traditions and ethics of the medical profession require the physician to do his utmost without regard to conditions.

No other member of the community is so indispensable to the entire community. The youngest child and the oldest patriarch, and all between these extremes, need his counsel and his care. Those who live in the mansion, and those who live in the cottage or hovel, are equally in need of his assistance.

No other public servant knows the people of the community as does the physician; not the minister who preaches from the pulpit, not the lawyer, not the teacher, not the postmaster, not the merchant. And because he knows so much of family history he is in a position to speak words of warning that will save his patients from practices that are injurious to body, mind, and soul.

Because of the service he renders the community in which he lives and does his work, there is no one else to whom the community owes so much of love and honor and gratitude, and there is no one else whose loss is

mourned so sincerely when he is called out of time into eternity, as the family physician.

For twenty-seven years Dr. Kilgour has lived and practiced medicine on College Hill and in all the region round about. As a physician he was the servant of the community. He was subject to call at any hour of the day or night, in heat or cold, in sunshine and in storm. In all those years he never refused to respond to the cry of need. Whether the sick were rich or poor, white or black, made no difference. He was always ready to do what he could to relieve suffering and to prolong life. The question of compensation, or the lack of compensation, never determined his course or even entered his mind.

Dr. Kilgour spent his entire professional life here in your midst. He went in and out of your homes; he treated you in his office; he met you on the street; his very presence brought hope and joy to all with whom he had to do. His radiant face and cheery words often did the sick as much good as the medicine. His ample and evident knowledge of the human system and its diseases and the proper treatment of those diseases inspired confidence in his patients. Besides, he was always the Christian gentleman, kind, considerate, gentle, and that mightily helped the sick towards recovery.

May I remind you that Dr. Kilgour's influence was not confined to College Hill and Mount Healthy and Mount Airy and Cincinnati and the open country, but was felt round the world. For twenty years he was the Medical Examiner of the Foreign Christian Missionary Society. Every missionary sent out by that great Society in that time passed through his hands and was vouched for by him as being in first-class physical condition. There are men and women in Tibet, on the Congo, on the Momboyo, on the Yangtse, in India, in Japan, in the Philippines, in the West Indies, who were examined

by him and who have regarded him ever since as a personal friend and deeply interested in their welfare and in their work. To each and all these the report of his departure will be a source of grief. Sometimes he discovered latent disease or latent weakness and by keeping the candidates at home has saved them and the Society from disappointment and loss. The day of his death he examined a woman who wished to go to China. He advised her to wait a year and see if her condition might not then warrant an appointment.

He was ever ready to examine candidates and did his work in a thoroughly scientific fashion. All those years he insisted on serving without pay. It was a delight to him to know these young men and women who were planning to go into all the world to make Christ's saving grace and power known to peoples who had never heard his name, and to make a contribution to the work of the Society of which he was an honored member. While he was a medical student he worked in the Mission Rooms part of every day of the week. In that service he learned much about the fields and the qualifications of the men and women that should be sent to them, and that knowledge was of immense advantage to him as a Medical Examiner.

Dr. Kilgour was a physician, but he was more than that, he was the head of a family and a citizen. His home was one of the happiest in the land. His wife died, and his little daughter died; but under the management of his sister, Miss Annie Kilgour, the home was as bright and as ideal as before. Their home was one of boundless and gracious hospitality, such hospitality as one might expect in a king's palace. Dr. Kilgour was interested in the welfare of the community and eager to assist every worthy enterprise to the extent of his ability.

One other fact should be stated and emphasized. Dr. Kilgour was an earnest Christian man. He was born in a Christian home. His father spent a long and glorious life as a minister of the gospel. All the traditions

and all the influences of that home inclined the children to the church. In his boyhood Peter gave himself in love and trust to his Lord, and ever after honored the profession he made. Busy as he was with his large practice, he managed to arrange his affairs so that he could attend public worship. He was seldom absent from his accustomed place, and then for a sufficient reason. He not only attended, but he led the music. The music rested and refreshed him and prepared him for the message that followed. He supported the church with his presence and with his council and with his purse. He was a pillar, and the chief pillar for years, in the church of which he was a member.

It was said of our Lord that he went about doing good, healing all who were oppressed of the devil, for God was with Him. David Livingstone said that God had only one Son, and He made of Him a physician. Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the Kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. To John's messengers He said, "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, and the poor have good tidings preached to them." When He sent out the Twelve on their first preaching tour, he said to them, "As ye go, preach, saying, 'The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand'; heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons; freely ye have received, freely give." What was true of our Lord was true of Dr. Kilgour. He, too, went about doing good. That was his business, and his only business. He wore himself out in our service. Had he taken as good care of himself as he advised and urged his patients to take of themselves, in all probability he would be alive and well today and for years to come. It was as he was hastening from one appointment to another that the end came. His Master found him busy. He died as all strong men die, in harness, engaged in some worthy task.

There is one man mentioned in the New Testament as "Luke the beloved physician". He was for a time Paul's travelling companion. Doubtless when the mighty Apostle suffered from his thorn in the flesh, Luke ministered to him. I think it a most significant fact that the one physician whose name is given by inspiration is spoken of as "the beloved". The same term can be applied to Dr. Kilgour most appropriately. He had all the qualities that make men loveable. He was strong, courageous, unselfish, optimistic, interested in all that makes for righteousness. Sorrow and disappointment ennobled his nature.

Some suck up poison from a sorrow's core,
As naught but nightshade grew up on earth's ground;
Love turned all his to heart's ease,
And the more fate tried his bastions she but forced a door
Leading to sweeter manhood and more sound.

Matthew Arnold wrote of his father, the famous Dr. Arnold of Rugby, "Through thee I believe in the noble and great who are gone". He had a firm conviction that the strength his father practiced while here, strength that was zealous, beneficient, firm, was being utilized somewhere in the universe. Speaking of his father he said he was not like the men of the crowd who make life hideous, and arid, and vile. He was rather one of the souls that are tempered with fire - fervent, heroic and good; helpers and friends of mankind.

It is never easier to believe in life after death than in an hour like this. We cannot think of a spirit like Dr. Kilgour ceasing to exist. So much of intelligence and goodness and power must persist somewhere. God must have other work for his servant and child and under more favorable auspices. We shall miss him and be lonely without him; but we can assure our hearts that since Jesus died and rose again, even so them that sleep in

Jesus will God bring when he comes. Were it otherwise we would be even as others who sorrow without hope. You remember Whittier's lines:

Alas for him who never sees,
The stars shine through his cypress trees;
Who hopeless lays his dead away,
Nor looks to see the light of day
Across the mournful marbles play;
Who has not learned in hours of faith
The truth to sight and sense unknown,
That life is ever Lord of death,
And love can never lose its own.

We look up and see the stars shine through our cypress trees. We see the light of day across the mournful marbles play. We feel concerning our friend that he lives and shall live for evermore, and that it is well with him. I have known Dr. Kilgour for more than thirty years. For two years he and I worked in the same room. Ever since we have been friends. Our friendship was like that between David and Johnathan. It has been my privilege to know many good men; I never knew a better man than Dr. Kilgour. I count his friendship one of God's best gifts to me.

Many an impressive sermon has been preached from this pulpit; but none, I think, more impressive than the one that Dr. Kilgour's life and service are preaching just now. A few days ago he appeared in perfect health. He was full of hope and was planning for the future. Apparently, without a moment's warning, the end came. Through that sudden home-call God is speaking to you and me, saying, "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh", "What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch."

You have heard Miss Fillmore sing "Crossing the Bar". May I repeat

those lines?

Sunset, and evening star,
And one clear call for me,
And may there be no moaning on the bar
When I put out to sea.

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound or foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight, and evening bell,
And after that the dark;
And may there be no sadness of farewell
When I embark.

For though beyond the borne of time and sense
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to meet my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar.

I cherish the hope that I shall meet Dr. Kilgour face to face and the Master he served so devotedly and loyally, and a great host besides, when I have crossed the bar. I wish the same for you all. May you meet the good Doctor whom you have loved long since and lost awhile.

Peter Thomson Kilgour

A Tribute from a friend to relatives in Canada.

You will not need to have written for you the story of the life whose earthly voyage began among you, but as your hearts are troubled and hurt, and your eyes blurred with tears, it may help to hear the impression left upon those who stood awed and silent while the friends who knew him best, said "God-speed," as his exultant spirit took its long flight upward through the windswept spaces to the Hills of God.

I wonder if I can give you just a glimpse of what befell us, as we came, hurried, harried, called from our petty concerns by the shock of his sudden going, to the funeral services in the College Hill Presbyterian Church.

We took our places at the end of a long line outside the church filing slowly past the flower-filled chancel, stopping for a moment beside the simple casket with its blanket of roses and green leaves. The spirit as it fled from the tired body, had dropped a veil of peace over the noble face. We paused, wistfully questioning the silence that had fallen between us and our friend; the peace that is now his, seemed to pierce the barriers of flesh and time and space, and in us too, wondering, not knowing, yet believing, stirred the spirit of the eternal voyager, and through our tears we could send the last cry of our hearts along whatever path his soul is now speeding on.

"God speed thee, Friend,
And bring thee safe, exultant
To thy journey's end."

The tears were near the surface, but they were not despairing tears. They were for the loneliness of those who would miss him so sorely in the daily going and

coming. No one could look into that calm face, and not believe that somewhere in God's big universe Peter Kilgour still lives and works and sings. Even on the celestial shore there may be stumbling little feet unaccustomed to the golden streets, or tired old eyes dazzled by the glories of the New Jerusalem. There may be those whose joy is made imperfect by our rebellious hearts and these he would be quick to comfort. Through all the services of farewell, there vibrated through the hushed church a sense of abounding life, of life begun anew with fresh strength, keener intellect and surer vision. Surely never did funeral before echo so triumphant a paean of victory. There was no extravagent eulogy - he would have been the first to shrink from that - but a simple service of scripture and prayer and quiet moments when the organ softly eased the burdened hearts of those who were closest to him in this life, full chords that told of broken links to be bound into a harmonious chain once more.

I do not know what Scripture was read, nor what music was played, but only that five men of God with whom he had walked and talked and worked in human service, with brave and cheerful words committed his spirit to the Father whose loving care he had never doubted. I remember that Archibald McLean talked in intimate fashion, as only a Scotsman can, with God, and drew us all closely into the circle around the Throne into which we felt sure Peter Thomson Kilgour was being welcomed with great joy. How then should we sorrow overmuch ?

The few friends who were privileged to stand near while the work-worn body was lowered into the flower-lined grave, in a brilliant burst of sunshine, came away with a new vision of the glory and value and eternal worth of a life lived not for self, but for service.

The Community of College Hill had asked for a memorial service on Wednesday evening. Neither at this meeting was there eulogistic extravagence,

but simple testimony to the place Peter Kilgour held in the cimmunity and in the hearts of his neighbours, as a citizen, as the Beloved Physician, as a man. "What are we going to do?" was the cry wrung from every heart. Who will lead every good movement for the improvement of the community life ? Who will comfort us in grief ? Who will heal and cheer ? And yet through all the terror of bereavement rang the same triumphant note, the same certainty that his work would not be halted.

His friends spoke of him as he had worked among them, of his sincerity, his unfailing courtesy and fine breeding, his quick perception of the beautiful in music or books or flowers, of his own lovely gift of song, of what his buoyant presence had meant to them in sickness; of how his tender sympathy and abundant faith had helped them in grief; of his great brotherly love healing their hates; his sincerity stilling their fears.

His pastor told of how much easier it was to preach when Peter Kilgour was in the congregation; and we knew that many an unknown speaker must have turned instinctively toward his intent face for the first quick recognition of the truths he was blunderingly trying to express.

We were glad that they had not waited until he died to speak their thought of him. That what they spoke through blinding tears at this Memorial Service, they had sometimes said to him in loving pride, while his embarrassed laugh made light of the tribute. Yes, we were glad that he knew even in this life that his neighbours loved him.

How glad he must be that the monument College Hill has chosen to erect to him is a living one, that while he is busy around the Throne, Red Cross nurses are to be trained in his name to do the work he plainly saw would be so sorely needed.